



BGST This Week

BIBLICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

September 2013

Issue No. 15

A Reflection

There was a man who decided to tidy up his room when he incidentally found an old, yellowish shoe-repair ticket on his table. This ticket was dated ten years ago. But thinking he had nothing to lose, he went to the shop and gave ticket to the cobbler. The cobbler looked at the date and began searching the storeroom for the unclaimed shoes. After several minutes, the cobbler returned with the ticket. Then the man asked, "What's wrong? Couldn't find the shoes?" "Oh, no, I found them," said the cobbler, "and they'll be ready by next Friday." Procrastination! It has been said that "Procrastination is the assassination of motivation." In about 536 B.C., some 50,000 Israelites returned to Israel from their captivity and began (re)building the temple which had been destroyed during the Babylonian invasion. But as time went on, the Israelites decided to focus their attention on other urgent matters, hence delaying the rebuilding programme. The restoring work of the temple gradually came to a halt and this state of affair continued for sixteen years. Prophet Haggai knew that procrastination was not the result of the lack of time but of an attitude which must be dealt with.

Haggai begins by reiterating the reason (or excuse?) the Israelites gave concerning the rebuilding of the temple, "Oh it is not time, it is not time to build the temple." Doesn't this sound familiar? The fact is, the people had time for their homes but no time for God's temple. In Haggai chapter 1, our attention is drawn to verse 6 in which the prophet reprimands the people for their lack of perceptiveness. If they had been perceptive, they would discern that something was not right and reckon with the fact that the rebuilding work must be continued. In the final analysis, the Israelites' "unreadiness" to restore the temple was perhaps a result of their unbelief in God. They believed that they must do everything to keep themselves alive and comfortable. They had no time for God.

Our attention is again drawn to an interesting word-play between **brex'** ("desolate") in 1:9 and **br,xo** ("drought") in 1:11. To put it simply, the point of the word-play is this: as long as the temple lies desolate, the nation would experience drought. In the OT, we observe that one of the ways God chastised his people for their disobedience was to withhold rain. This word-play immediately caught the attention of the people. God had been signalling to them through drought and poor harvest of their negligence in the things of God. But they did not realise it. Hence, Haggai took them to task.

How about us? Are we also hardening our hearts and refusing to believe in divine providence?

Have we become indifferent, hence, de-sensitised to the things of God?

Is our "slowness" in doing God's work a result of our unbelief?

I hope not. My prayer is that we will fan up the flame which God has planted in us for his glory wherever he has placed us!

The Editor,
Dr Andrew Lee

Closure of BGST Office, Library & Book Corner- 13 September 2013

The library, book corner and office will be closed at 5 pm on Friday, 13 September 2013 as all staff will be supporting the BGST Public Lecture "How Should We Treat The Bible?" held at Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church that evening. We apologize for any inconvenience caused and seek your understanding.

Staff Devotion Time

BGST Staff Devotion time is scheduled on Wednesday 18 September, 12 noon.

Friends & visitors are welcome to join us for fellowship and devotion together at our centre.

Course Schedule

For Semester 1 of Academic Year 2013-2014, please visit our webpage at <http://bgst.edu.sg/media/files/courses/2013-2014-sem1.pdf>.

For course inquiries, please email us at inquiry@bgst.edu.sg

Upcoming Public Lecture - 13 September 2013



HOW SHOULD WE TREAT THE BIBLE?

Friday 13 September 2013 | 8:00 pm
Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church



Speaker: Prof Alan Millard

*Rankin Professor Emeritus & Honorary Senior
Fellow of Hebrew & Ancient Semitic
Languages*

To register: please call 62276815 or email: inquiry@bgst.edu.sg

Presented By



BIBLICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Course Highlights

John Wesley and his Legacy in the Life of John Sung

TS/CS242 (3 CR) *Blended Learning*

Lecturer(s): Professor Victor Shepherd / Tutor: Mr Tan Kok Choon

Venue: BGST @ 50 Kallang Pudding Road

Dates: Fridays, Sep 27, Oct 11, 25, Nov 8, 22, Dec 6

Time: 7.15 pm - 9.45 pm

This course is devoted to the life and writings of John Wesley (1703-91) and the evangelical traditions he had affected in the person of John Sung. Wesley was believed to have inspired and shaped the early evangelical spirituality. In particular, his teaching on the conception of Christian Perfection, was the origin of a Wesleyan and Holiness tradition and his legacy, extending well beyond this, placed him as a key figure in the history of Christianity in general, and the history of Christian spirituality in particular. In a different 2 continent, Sung similarly stood as a "pivotal figure" in Christian history. Often described as "China's John Wesley", Sung's was known to have defined Protestantism in 20th Century China and the spiritual traditions of the Chinese churches.

To view course description, please visit <http://www.bgst.edu.sg/media/files/courses/TS-CS242-2013-14.pdf>

Discipleship and Mentoring

CS/ECF 505 (1.5 CR)

Lecturer(s): Rev Dr Tan Soo-Inn

Venue: Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church

Dates: Wednesdays, Oct 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, Nov 6



The greatest need of the hour is a transformed community, mature followers of Jesus who will bring Godly wisdom and grace into a needy world. But how do we help followers of Jesus grow in Christlike maturity? This is a fundamental question but one that suffers from over familiarity. This course will revisit key questions like: What is a disciple? What does Christlikeness really mean? What resources has God provided to help us grow in Christlikeness?

We will see that making disciples is the primary call of the church and spiritual mentoring is the primary "method" that God has provided to help people grow in Christlikeness. This is the model that Jesus Himself gave us. We will look at the biblical basis for spiritual mentoring and explore ways that discipling/ spiritual mentoring can be done in our churches. We will focus on biblical principles and ways we can actually do discipling in Singapore in the 21st century.

To view course description, please visit <http://www.bgst.edu.sg/media/files/courses/CS-ECF505-2013.pdf>

Preaching Isaiah

OT368 (3 CR)

Lecturer(s): Rev Dr Daniel Chua

Venue: Mt Carmel BP Church

Dates: Mondays, Oct 7, 14, 21, 28, Nov 11, 18, 25, Dec 2, 9, 16

Time: 7.15 pm - 10.15 pm



This course aims to provide an overview of the Book of Isaiah with the aim of seeing it eventually taught or preached at the local church. We want to bridge the gap from understanding the biblical text to actually teaching and preaching it. We want students to "learn-and-transfer" by linking two connecting dots. First, we want to help students grasp the major themes/ underlying message of Isaiah so that they can be confident to go back to teach/preach through the book. Second, we want to give students a head-start and launch them into the process of working on selected chapters - to understand the flow of thought; develop and refine their own teaching/ preaching outlines; and learn how to manuscript complete teaching lessons/ sermons based on a text they have chosen.

To view course description, please visit <http://www.bgst.edu.sg/media/files/courses/OT368-2013.pdf>

Highlight Of Upcoming Courses

Spirituality Retreat Experience: Nature, Purpose and Dynamics

CS504 (3 CR)

Lecturer(s): Mr Chong Ser Choon

Venue: BGST @ 50 Kallang Pudding Road

Dates: Tuesdays, Oct 22, 29, Nov 5, 12, 19

Time: 7.15 pm - 10.00 pm

Spiritual Retreat is scheduled from Nov 14 -17 (4D3N) & fees are charged separately



The course will provide a biblical and historical survey of the practice of retreat and how it evolved in the history of the Church. We will also discuss its nature, purpose and dynamics. We will also look at how the discipline of spiritual retreat is related to other spiritual disciplines and its contribution to the Christian's spiritual formation. We will end the teaching segment by discussing the practical and broader issues of how Christians today can practice and discern the Presence of God in the midst of the busy demands of family, work and ministry.

The course will culminate in 4 days 3 nights residential retreat. The teaching segment of the course will serve to prepare participants for the spiritual retreat experience. Through this course, we aim to provide a model to encourage Christians to cultivate and incorporate this spiritual discipline into their Christian life.

To view course description, please visit <http://www.bgst.edu.sg/media/files/courses/CS504-2013.pdf>

Introduction to Early Buddhism

IC203 (1.5 CR)

Lecturer(s): Rev Ng Seng Chuan

Venue: BGST @ 50 Kallang Pudding Road

Dates: Thursdays, Oct 24, 31, Nov 7, 14, 21, 28

Time: 7.15 pm - 10.00 pm



This course attempts to present the essential features of Buddhist philosophy and history from an objective and sympathetic perspective. The underlying assumption is that, to reach a Buddhist or the Buddhist community, it is necessary to assure them that we have heard and understood what they believe about the Buddha.

It is also assumed that, in a world rife with religious tension, the church needs to prepare a cohort of ambassadors of peace who will facilitate the opening up of channels of communication between practitioners of different religions.

This course, therefore, is offered as a sympathetic appreciation of Buddhist culture and history, and not as an antipathetic critique of a religion alien to the church.

To view course description, please visit <http://www.bgst.edu.sg/media/files/courses/IC203-2013.pdf>

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